

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

*Service Score Results:* Baseline

**Name of Program and Service:** Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bucks County, OPTIONS-Mentoring Service  
Cohort Total: 12 SPEP ID: 38  
Selected Timeframe: 3/1/2012 – 4/30/2014  
Date(s) of Interview(s): May 12, 2014  
Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Bucks County, William Batty, Heather Perry & Maureen Raquet  
Person Preparing Report: William Batty & Heather Perry

**Description of Service:** *This should include a **brief** overview of the service within the context of the program, the location and if community based or residential. Indicate the type of youth referred, how the service is delivered, the purpose of service and any other **relevant** information to help the reader understand the SPEP service type classification. (350 character limit)*

A chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated in Bucks County for 50 plus years. It was reported that it is “a local nonprofit chapter which offers mentoring relationships for all children who need and want them, and a one-to-one relationship built on trust and friendship that can blossom into a future of unlimited potential.” Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bucks County (BBBSBC) offers different types of programming and they are identified as “core programming” and “site-based programming.” The Options Program, a collaborative effort between the Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department and BBBSBC since prior to 1984, is the focus of this report. It was reported that the Options Program is unique to the BBBSBC Chapter as it is believed that it does not exist within other BBBS Chapters. It is unique because the traditional mission of BBBS involves a one on one match between an adult volunteer and a juvenile where the Options Program involves a match between a professional and multiple juveniles. The Options Program operates throughout Bucks County from as far north as Quakertown to as far south as Bristol. It was reported that the service was similar throughout the County. “Options Program is a direct service, Case Management/Mentoring program that provides youth between 7 and 17 years of age with a range of professional services including individual and family counseling, case management services, youth advocacy, coordination of services, community service, job coaching, community outreach and mentoring activities. This unique program emphasizes professional, one on one contact with youth involved, or at risk of involvement with the juvenile court system and who are in need of increased levels of support and guidance.” Those delivering the service were identified as case managers. Options had 1 full time case manager and 4 part time case managers. The number of contacts with juveniles/month was based on the referral source. Case managers were required to meet with a juvenile weekly, or at a minimum of 4 hours/month. The goal was identified as recidivism reduction and the tasks performed at the onsite visit/meeting are as follows: 1. “Targeting” a one on one relationship with the assigned juvenile, 2. Building trust with the assigned juvenile through the frequency of contacts and the setting where contacts occur, 3. Meeting with and acting as a role model with the assigned juvenile, 4. Participating in activities such as fishing, basketball, tutoring, etc. with the assigned juvenile, 5. Counseling in informal settings with the assigned juvenile, 6. Developing a case plan with the assigned juvenile, 7. Referring youth to other therapeutic services through the Therapeutic Services Coordinator, 8. Connecting youth with other community resources and, 9. Monitoring probation conditions (CSW, LOA, etc.) and assisting in their completion.

**The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:**

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Mentoring

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service type? Behavioral Contracting/Management

Was the supplemental service provided? No      Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 30

Total Points Earned: 25      Total Points Possible: 35

2. **Quality of Service:** Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training and supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Earned: 10      Total Points Possible: 20

3. **Amount of Service:** Score was derived from examination of weeks and hours each youth in the cohort received the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP service categorization. Each SPEP service type has varying amounts of duration and dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 6

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Earned: 6 Total Points Possible: 20

4. **Youth Risk Level:** The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

9 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 7 points

1 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 0 points

Total Points Earned: 7 Total Points Possible: 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 48 total points awarded out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP therapeutic service. (eg: individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

*Note: Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.*

**Program Optimization Percentage:** 51% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (eg: individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research)

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## The SPEP and Performance Improvement

The intended use of the SPEP is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service feedback report, and these recommendations are the focus of the performance improvement plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the local juvenile court. The recommendations for this service included in the feedback report are:

1. Improving manual/written protocols
  - Include a description of the mentoring service type and how mentoring is to be delivered
  - Document that the manual/protocols are being utilized or referenced during service delivery
  - Review/update manual/protocols regularly and document review/update
  - Utilize the YLS to identify a target population best suited for service type and identify target population in manual/protocols and collaborate with probation department to train staff in YLS
2. Utilizing behavioral contracting/management as a supplemental service to mentoring
3. Improving upon the existing staff training
  - Increase and document service type specific (Mentoring) and service type specific delivery training for case managers
4. Improving upon the existing staff supervision
  - Provide written feedback to those delivering the service about their delivery beyond a yearly written performance
5. Improving response to drift
  - Responses to drift should be more specific for service type and delivery
6. Improving targeted dosage and risk level served
  - Collaborate with the probation department to meet targeted duration and contact hour requirements for mentoring service type and increase referrals of moderate/high risk juvenile and decrease low risk referrals
7. Consulting with developer of MAYSI as it relates to its uses- [thomas.grisso@umassmed.edu](mailto:thomas.grisso@umassmed.edu)

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

## Service Score Results: Reassessment

Name of Program and Service: Big Brother Big Sister of Bucks County, Options-Mentoring Service

Cohort Total: 10

SPEP ID: 38-T02

Selected Timeframe: Jun. 2, 2015 - Jun. 15, 2016

Date(s) of Interview(s): July 20, 2016

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Bucks County, Sandy Stewart, William Batty & Nick Caramenico

Person Preparing Report: Sandy Stewart, William Batty and Heather Perry

**Description of Service:** *This should include a **brief** overview of the service within the context of the program, the location and if community based or residential. Indicate the type of youth referred, how the service is delivered, the purpose of service and any other **relevant** information to help the reader understand the SPEP service type classification. (350 character limit)*

A chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated in Bucks County for 50 plus years. It was reported that it is “a local nonprofit chapter which offers mentoring relationships for all children who need and want them, and a one-to-one relationship built on trust and friendship that can blossom into a future of unlimited potential.” Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bucks County (BBBSBC) offers different types of programming and they are identified as “core programming” and “site-based programming.” The Options Program, a collaborative effort between the Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department and BBBSBC since prior to 1984, is the focus of this report. It was reported that the Options Program is unique to the BBBSBC Chapter as it is believed that it does not exist within other BBBS Chapters. It is unique because the traditional mission of BBBS involves a one on one match between an adult volunteer and a juvenile where the Options Program involves a match between a professional and multiple juveniles. The Options Program operates throughout Bucks County from as far north as Quakertown to as far south as Bristol. It was reported that the service was similar throughout the County. “Options Program is a direct service, Case Management/Mentoring program that provides youth between 7 and 17 years of age with a range of professional services including individual and family counseling, case management services, youth advocacy, coordination of services, community service, job coaching, community outreach and mentoring activities. This unique program emphasizes professional, one on one contact with youth involved, or at risk of involvement with the juvenile court system and who are in need of increased levels of support and guidance.” Those delivering the service were identified as case managers. Options had 5 full time and 2 part time service delivery staff. The number of contacts with juveniles/month was based on the referral source. Service delivery staff were required to meet with a juvenile weekly, or at a minimum of 12 hours/month. With the goal of recidivism reduction, and derived from the needs identified in the youth's YLS, the tasks performed at the onsite visit/meeting are as follows: 1. “Targeting” a one on one relationship with the assigned juvenile, 2. Building trust with the assigned juvenile through the frequency of contacts and the setting where contacts occur, 3. Meeting with and acting as a role model with the assigned juvenile, 4. Participating in activities such as fishing, basketball, tutoring, etc. with the assigned juvenile, 5. Counseling in informal settings with the assigned juvenile, 6. Developing a case plan with the assigned juvenile, 7. Referring youth to other therapeutic services through the Therapeutic Services Coordinator, 8. Connecting youth with other community resources and, 9. Monitoring probation conditions (CSW, LOA, etc.) and assisting in their completion.

**The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:**

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Mentoring

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service type? Behavioral Contracting/Management

Was the supplemental service provided? Yes      Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 30

Total Points Earned: 30      Total Points Possible: 35

2. **Quality of Service:** Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training and supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Earned: 20      Total Points Possible: 20

3. **Amount of Service:** Score was derived from examination of weeks and hours each youth in the cohort received the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP service categorization. Each SPEP service type has varying amounts of duration and dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 2

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 4

Total Points Earned: 6 Total Points Possible: 20

4. **Youth Risk Level:** The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

10 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points

1 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 0 points

Total Points Earned: 12 Total Points Possible: 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 68 total points awarded out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP therapeutic service. (eg: individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

*Note: Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.*

**Program Optimization Percentage:** 72% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (eg: individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research)

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## The SPEP and Performance Improvement

The intended use of the SPEP is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service feedback report, and these recommendations are the focus of the performance improvement plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the local juvenile court. The recommendations for this service included in the feedback report are:

Options scored a 68 for the Basic Score and 72%, or 68 out of 95 total possible points, for the Program Optimization Percentage. It is classified as a Mentoring service type. These scores represent an increase from the baseline findings (5/12/14) of the initial SPEP scoring results. The program could continue to improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by:

1. Including/documenting the Mentoring service type's targeted criminogenic needs, targeted offender risk levels and targeted dosage/duration to the Options' manual/protocol and court reports,
2. Conducting/arranging with BCJP YLS booster training at a minimum once/year for those who deliver the service and add this requirement to the program's training procedures,
3. Conducting/arranging MI booster trainings with BCJP at a specific frequency/year for those who deliver the service and add this requirement to the program's training procedures,
4. Conducting/arranging service delivery specific training such as YLS, MI, Mentoring and manual/written protocol training for new hires who deliver the service followed by booster trainings and add these requirements to the program's training procedures,
5. Including "Stages of Development" and its contents to the objectives and competencies to be achieved and assessed for the "Options Case Manger Objectives for Service Delivery for Juvenile Court Cases" checklist,
6. Continuing to submit Outcome Measure templates to BCJP for analysis every 90 days when delivering the service,
7. Creating and implementing an "alumni tracking system" so risk reduction can be measured, and
8. Collaborating with BCJP to discuss different options available to meet dosage/duration issues when they arise.

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

*Service Score Results:* Reassessment 2

SPEP™ ID and Time: 38-T03

Agency Name: Big Brothers Big Sisters  
Program Name: Options Level II  
Service Name: Options Level II  
Cohort Total: 34  
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: All delinquent youth who began this service on/after December 13, 2018 and ended this service on/before March 1, 2020  
Referral County(s): Bucks  
Date(s) of Interview(s): September 3, 2020  
Lead County: Bucks  
Probation Representative(s): Nick Caramenico/Rich Kubicek  
EPIS Representative: Kevin Perluke

## Description of Service:

A chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated in Bucks County for 50 plus years. It was reported that it is “a local nonprofit chapter which offers mentoring relationships for all children who need and want them, and a one-to-one relationship built on trust and friendship that can blossom into a future of unlimited potential.” Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bucks County (BBBSBC) offers different types of programming and they are identified as “core programming” and “site-based programming.” The common theme between these programs is the one on one match of a juvenile with an adult or high school student to start and grow a relationship. The following was reported: 1. BBBSBC has approximately 290 volunteers and 16 staff members. 2. BBBSBC has approximately 274 children being mentored. 3. BBBSBC has fifteen staff members who are full time employees and one part-time employee. The Options Services Level II Program has been a part of BBBSBC since prior to 1984. It was a collaborative effort between the Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department and BBBSBC. It was reported that the Options Services Level II Program is unique to the BBBSBC Chapter as it is believed that it does not exist within other BBBS Chapters. It is unique because the traditional mission of BBBS involves a one on one match between an adult volunteer and a juvenile where the Options Services Level II Program involves a match between a professional and multiple juveniles. The Options Program operates throughout Bucks County from as far north as Quakertown to as far south as Bristol. It was reported that the service was similar throughout the County. The Options Services Level II Program receives referrals from the entities that follow: 1. Youth Aid Panels (YAP), 2. Children and Youth Social Services Agency (C&Y), and 3. The Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department (BCJP). The service delivered by Options staff was identified in a document entitled “Section 7 – Options Services Level II Program Procedures.” In the “Overview” section of this document, Options Services Level II was described as follows: “Options Program is a direct service, Case Management/Mentoring Program that provides youth between 7 and 18 years of age with a range of professional services including individual and family counseling, case management services, youth advocacy, coordination of services, community service, job coaching, community outreach, and mentoring activities. This unique program emphasizes professional, one on one contact with youth involved, or at risk of involvement with the juvenile court system and who need increased levels of support and guidance. Those delivering the service were identified as Case Managers. Options Services Level II had 6 full time Case Managers and 2 Senior Case Managers. The Director also had a partial caseload. Caseloads ranged from 15 – 18 juveniles for a full-time Case Manager. The number of contacts with juveniles/month was based on the referral source. Case Managers were required to meet with juveniles “bi-weekly” or every other week if the referral was generated by Youth Aid Panels or C&Y. Case Managers were required to meet with a juvenile every week or at a minimum of 13 hours/month if the referral was generated by Bucks County Juvenile Probation. Also, Bucks County Juvenile Probation referrals were counted as two cases because of the increased contact hours for those cases. For example, a Case Manager’s caseload would be 20 if that Case Manager had 5 Bucks County Juvenile Probation cases. The goals for Youth Aid Panels and C&Y cases were identified as diversion and prevention. The goal for Bucks County Juvenile Probation cases was identified as recidivism reduction. Recently, a hybrid mentoring approach has taken place due to restrictions from Covid-19. It was reported verbally at the onsite visit/meeting that case managers performed tasks as follows: 1. “Targeting” a one on one relationship with the assigned juvenile, 2. Building trust with the assigned juvenile through the frequency of contacts and the setting where contacts occur, 3. Meeting with and acting as a role model with the assigned juvenile, 4. Participating in activities such as fishing, basketball, tutoring, etc. with the assigned juvenile, 5. Counseling in informal settings with the assigned juvenile, 6. Developing a case plan with the assigned juvenile, 7. Referring youth to other therapeutic services through the Therapeutic Services Coordinator, 8. Connecting youth with other community resources as well as connecting youth with members of society who display positive decision making, 9. Monitoring probation conditions (CSW, LOA, etc.) and assisting in their completion. 10. Community Service- example would be a community garden. 11. Support youth in educational settings, for example attending IEP meetings. 12. Group activities in which the youth participate in positive skill-building activities. For example, female youth may participate on how to build their self-esteem in a positive manner. 13. Behavior Contracting- which is used for BCJP cases only.

## The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:

### 1. SPEP™ Service Type: Mentoring

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service Type? Behavioral Management

Was the supplemental service provided? Yes      Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 30

Total Points Received: 30      Total Points Possible: 35

2. Quality of Service: Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training, staff supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Received: 20      Total Points Possible: 20

**3. Amount of Service:** Score was derived by calculating the total number of weeks and hours received by each youth in the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP™ service categorization. Each SPEP™ service type has varying amounts of duration and contact hours. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

**Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks:** 4

**Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours:** 4

**Total Points Received:** 8 **Total Points Possible:** 20

**4. Youth Risk Level:** The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

34 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points

5 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 3 points

**Total Points Received:** 15 **Total Points Possible:** 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 73 total points received out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP™ therapeutic service. (e.g. individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

*Note: Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.*

**Program Optimization Percentage:** 77% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (e.g. individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research.)

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## The SPEP™ and Performance Improvement

The intended use of the SPEP™ is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service Feedback Report, and these recommendations are the focus of the Performance Improvement Plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the juvenile probation department.

### 1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

#### a. Written Protocol:

- i. Ensure that the manual is reviewed and documented on a yearly basis.

#### b. Staff Training:

- i. Ensure training process is documented in manual.
- ii. Ensure that booster trainings are documented.
- iii. Create a process (Training Database) to collect all training activity for Case Managers.

#### c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Ensure that the manual describes the supervision process.
- ii. Ensure there is documentation that the supervision process occurred as scheduled.
- iii. Develop a written protocol on how performance evaluations should be administered.

#### d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Develop a drift policy to identify departure from the fidelity and quality of service delivery.
- ii. Document corrective actions steps taken to prevent drift in service delivery.
- iii. Implement Response to Drift Policy/Procedures and evaluate for effectiveness.
- iv. Utilize Outcome Forms to improve service delivery.

### 2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Improve communication with Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department to better match research recommendations for the targeted amount of service.

- b. Develop a communication protocol with Options and Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department to address youth being discharged early from the program without looking at the research recommended targeted amount of service.

### 3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:

- a. Continue to communicate with Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department regarding the research-supported targeted risk population recommended for this service type there are larger positive effects on recidivism with high risk juveniles.